

A Model Agro-based Entrepreneur – Ms. Janaki Chowdhary

Ms. Janaki Chaudhary 35, is a dweller of Rajhena Village Vevvelopment Committee (VDC) of Banke district situated in mid-western part of Nepal. She belongs to a poor joint family without sufficient land for cultivation and access to any source of income.

While struggling economically and socially, she found rays of hope when there was support of European Union in bringing Community Peace Building Program through Women Group Empowerment. She received several capacity building opportunities including 5 days mushroom farming training provided by the agriculture service centre of Banke district. She still remembered this insightful experience “It was my big life time opportunity” overwhelmed Ms. Chaudhary.

She felt very confident on herself. It was first time in her life where she believed that she can do something. With lots of hopes and confidence, she decided to take a courageous step of investing Rs. 500 (Euro 4.95) in mushroom cultivation with technical support of the Agricultural Service Centre and was able to earn Rs 3000 (Euro 29.70) that is almost 6 times out of her investment.

It was the first time; she could contribute her husband in sharing cost for children’s education and other household expenses. As a household cooker and mother, she felt proud when she could serve fresh mushroom to her kids and family members. In this way, it also brought change in the level of calorie in-take in poor family like hers.

This mushroom farming earning was her first income. She expressed “*I wonder, why EU supported program was not there earlier to make us aware about women friendly economic opportunities like mushroom farming to change the way we deal with our life*”.

Her pride being the first Chaudhary lady from her community to practice and gain success from mushroom farming had influenced other women from her community and beyond by networking with the agriculture service center. Working together with other women in the group helped in building trust and mutual cooperation by spreading message of peace.

“Engagement in this program supported by European Union is the key milestone for my economic and social empowerment so that I am able to contribute in promoting my family and social harmony” recalled Ms. Chaudhary proudly.

